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MEDIA ADVISORY

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FORMER FIRE CHIEF'S TESTIMONY AT TODAY'S SENATE HEARING BACKS CITY ATTORNEY'S PRELIMINARY FINDINGS ON SAN DIEGO'S 2007 WILDFIRES

San Diego, CA—Copies of the City Attorney's *San Diego 2007 Fires, Preliminary Findings* were delivered to the 17- member Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies of the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations which conducted a field hearing today in San Diego on the 2007 Southern California wildfires. The meeting was chaired by U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein.

The City Attorney's November 1, 2007 report paralleled comments made today by former San Diego Fire Chief Jeff Bowman who stated that the answers to questions being asked today are mostly likely contained in the *Governor's Blue Ribbon Fire Commission Report* of April 4, 2004. The *Blue Ribbon Report* was released in response to the 2003 Cedar Fire which destroyed 3,241 structures and killed 16 people in San Diego County.

"One of the critical recommendations made in the *Blue Ribbon Report* was the implementation of an aggressive brush management program to reduce the primary fuel associated with wildland fires," said City Attorney Michael Aguirre. "We don't need to reinvent the wheel here, but rather go back and take action on the recommendations contained in several post fire reports."

The City Attorney's Interim Report No. 21, *San Diego Fires 200, Preliminary Finding-- Need for Brush Management, Timely Notification of Fire Danger and Evacuation Plan* concluded the following:

- Mayor and City Council should immediately appoint an independent commission to review all relevant issues including those raised by the *City Attorney's Interim Report No. 21*;
- Develop and execute an aggressive brush management program;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Reverse 911 system to provide residents with timely notification of emergencies; and
- Develop an appropriate evacuation plan to protect the safety and security of city residents.

To view the *City Attorney's Interim Report No. 21*, visit www.sandiegocityattorney.org, click "2007 Wildfires."

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